

Poor Show By Down-To- Earth Wycombe

By "CHILTERN"

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Barking 1.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS put on one of their worst displays of the season at Loakes Park on Saturday, when the only thing they can be happy about is the fact that they got both points. And to say the least they were more than fortunate against lowly-placed Barking, who played the more direct football for long periods.

Barking's trouble was that they could not finish, and had they owned a real marksman they would most probably have taken at least a share of the points back to Essex.

For Wanderers it was like after the Lord Mayor's Show. After the glamour of the F.A. Amateur Cup to come back to earth in an ordinary league match was too much. And their attitude of: "It's only Barking" almost came unstuck as the Essex side, who almost beat Hendon during the week, were the quicker to settle down to the ideal conditions.

That may sound Irish, but after weeks of ploughing around in heavy mud, Wanderers seemed quite surprised to find the ball bouncing again. The Wycombe ground staff had done a great job during the week, and after last week's rain the ground was in near-perfect condition.

AIMLESS

This was an uninspiring aimless game of football, overshadowed by bad passing, slow movements and a complete lack of urgency.

Wanderers controlled the early exchanges, and after ten minutes Tony Horseman put them ahead. It was a goal very similar to the one they scored at Hendon the previous week, with Bates working through on the right, going through to the by-line and pulling the ball back past the drawn goalkeeper to Horseman who was just waiting to bang it home.

The blunder of the game came six minutes later. For some reason known best to himself Bradshaw headed across his own goalmouth, fooling John Maskell, right to the feet of Barking's right winger Hanley.

The winger, who recently joined Barking from Leytonstone, was so surprised he shot softly from two yards and Maskell was able to launch himself at his feet and save.

It was a goal that never should have been missed. Hanley stood with the ball at his feet looking at the empty net as Maskell hurried into position and harried him.

In the 40th minute Barking had a further chance to get on terms, but both Murphy and Fox failed to get their heads to a good cross from Craddock.

Right on the interval Maskell showed a fine bit of positional anticipation in saving a Craddock header, and Samuels had hard luck for Wycombe when his flying header went just wide.

It was obvious Wycombe's luck could not last, and that Barking would score. And score they did in the 56 minute with the Wycombe defence all at sixes and sevens.

After Rundle had failed to clear Ratty slipped the ball through to Craddock who scored.

Wycombe's winner came from the boot of leading scorer Bates. After chasing a through ball the centre-forward scored with his second attempt. It was a well-taken goal—his 30th in the league this season.

White punched a Merrick centre off Samuel's head, and at the other end Maskell made a great save to a Webster shot, and then materialised from behind a ruck of players to pluck Craddock's header from under the bar.

Les Merrick was Wycombe's hardest working forward, and John Beck and goalkeeper Maskell were the best defenders.

Wycombe.—J. Maskell; D. Bradshaw, J. Beck; B. Baker, I. Rundle, A. Lewis, P. Royston, K. Samuels, P. Bates, T. Horseman, L. Merrick.

Barking.—P. White; R. Webster, D. Robertson; B. Ratty, S. Turner, R. Appleby; D. Murphy, F. Hilling, N. Fox, A. Craddock, R. Hanley.